

Residential Wood-Frame Construction: Stakeholder Research and Information Needs Assessment

Residential construction is a major part of the U.S. economy, driving job creation, economic growth, and individual prosperity. Consumers are expecting more from their new homes in terms of functionality and performance. Sustainability, energy efficiency, comfort, indoor air quality, durability, and cost all influence new home design. In addition, building codes and local requirements continue to raise the bar for builders and product manufacturers.

To remain a leader in the rapidly changing housing sector, the wood products industry must innovate to offer new solutions and reinvent to preserve the competitiveness of products and systems used successfully for decades. Focused research initiatives supported by government–private partnerships provide an industry-wide platform for developing informational resources on the application and performance of wood-based systems in housing.

This study focuses on obtaining feedback from key stakeholders on the challenges, innovation barriers, and research needs facing the residential industry. The scope of the study includes one- and two-family dwellings, low-rise multifamily buildings, mid-rise and high-rise residential buildings, new construction and retrofit projects, and all geographical locations within the United States.

Objective

The goal of this project is to identify and prioritize opportunities for strategic research investments that will enable the residential construction industry to overcome challenges to providing high-performance,



Web-based portal at <http://home2020.homeinnovation.com/>

superior quality, affordable homes while continuing to improve the industry's competitiveness as a major sector of the U.S. economy.

Approach

A variety of tools will be used to gather input from various stakeholders:

1. Focus groups of builders representing construction companies of various sizes and types
2. A survey of builders to prioritize captured ideas on challenges and barriers
3. A website portal for all interested stakeholders to submit research ideas, barriers, issues, and other information
3. A roadmap meeting of key industry stakeholder groups to finalize prioritization and initiate leveraging the results

The study is designed to be builder-focused in terms of identifying broader challenges facing the housing industry and prioritization of the needs.

Expected Outcomes

The outcome will include a prioritized summary of the industry challenges and issues that can be used to formulate specific research/development initiatives and partnerships to advance the industry at large and to ensure that the wood products remain competitive, supported with adequate technical and education information, and meet the market demands for quality and performance. The results will be used to help direct federal funding, with leveraged industry support, to cross-disciplined innovation initiatives for the next 5–10 years. It is anticipated that the developed priorities will help maintain focus on the industry in terms ensuring adequate support from various federal agencies with vested interest in the residential sector. In addition, having a consistent and credible voice on the issues facing the industry will support increased interagency collaboration and improve communications between various stakeholder associations.

Timeline

The project, dubbed #Home2020, was launched at the 2015 International Builders' Show in January 2015. The web-based portal located at <http://home2020.homeinnovation.com/> is now active and all interested parties are welcome to submit their input; all instructions are provided on the website. The project is expected to be completed in the first quarter of 2016.

Cooperators

Home Innovation Research Labs
USDA Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory

Contact Information

Vladimir Kochkin
Home Innovation Research Labs
Upper Marlboro, Maryland
(301) 430-6249; vkochkin@homeinnovation.com
Karen L. Martinson
USDA Forest Service, Forest Products Laboratory
Madison, Wisconsin
(608) 231-9450; klmartinson@fs.fed.us